

Editor's Update

Hello everyone and welcome to the second edition of our newsletter. We are now well into the routines of self-isolation and I for one have not been idle ! My gardening project 'Digging For Victory' is coming along and I even think the goldfish in the pond have gone into lockdown but more likely due to a visiting heron ! In light of the more frequent publication of the newsletter and the format changing, we have come up with a title for these pages. It will be referred to as '**Members' Musings**' to reflect news items sent to me by members so please don't hold back otherwise I will be out of a job! The amazing weather continues, and we are blessed not to be fighting the virus in the run up to the winter. But do keep in touch with family and those people you may not have contacted for many moons! My address book is open ready! They will be so pleased to hear from you.

A reminder to those of you who haven't already done this. Covid 19 monitoring is being carried out by King's College, Guys and St Thomas 'Hospitals in partnership with ZOE Global Ltd a health science company. They are asking people to Download the Ask Zoe/Covid-19 app and report daily, any symptoms including 'none' to help them track the path of the disease particularly among the elderly. It already has 2 million subscribers.

I was sent this lovely poem by Sandie Webb written by Kitty O'Meara a retired teacher from Madison Wisconsin who turned to writing in an effort to curb her own anxiety amid the news of the COVID-19 pandemic

And the people stayed home.

And they read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And they listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently. And the people healed.

And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal .And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

Dealing with Covid 19 boredom- Family Quiz. How about this idea sent by Mary McGregor? She and her family through using WhatsApp were able to run a family quiz with each participant asking 20 questions. It worked well though the younger age group set questions around animated films and related songs. Null points scored there!! Give it a try as it was fun doing it as a family.

Existing Groups

Bird Watching. Some members of our group had been looking forward to getting their binoculars at the ready along with hip flask and wellies for a trip to Norfolk later this month but unsurprisingly it was cancelled due to Covid and will now take place next April.

This trip would have focused on Spring Migration, so we anticipated seeing Nightingale ,Spoonbill, Ring Ouzel, Grasshopper Warbler, Hobby, Little Gull, Garganey, Goshawk, Stone Curlew, Firecrest, Woodlark, Hawfinch, Marsh Harrier, Bearded Tit and the Great Bittern.

Some birds dropping in could also be Hoopoe, Wryneck, Woodchat Shrike, Alpine Swift, Red Rumped Swallow, Black Kite, Citrine Wagtail and Purple Heron. We will have to make do with our own gardens and note our visitors won't be quite the same as in Norfolk!

Chalfonts U3A Facebook Group . We now have over 50 members keeping us posted on events in their daily lives and giving suggestions for us to consider eg cultural activities of which there are many being streamed on YouTube.

There is a link on the Website's home page to the following page: <https://chalfontsu3a.org.uk/cu3a-facebook-group/> There you will find a link to the PDF with instructions on how to join Facebook and the CU3A group. Gary Tomlin our webmaster can help where there are any questions or issues you may be having in creating a Facebook account or joining the group.

He has also set up an email address facebook@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Computer Issue? If you are having any problems with your computer you can email support@chalfontsu3a.org.uk and we will try and assist you via email. You can also post your questions on the Chalfonts U3A Facebook page.

Cryptic Crossword Group

The Cryptic Crossword group had an inaugural meeting on the Zoom platform on Friday 27th March . Nine of us fitted the screen and quality was very good. During this period of withdrawal we have decided to meet weekly instead of fortnightly. We are full up, but if you were thinking of asking to join, it may be that there would now be enough others to make a second group. If so, I'd be happy to guide you through the process. Just email Bob Leven at crypticcrosswords@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Discovering Art. The convenors of the Discovering Art Group are keeping in touch with members by sending out their own newsletter on the first Thursday in each month, the day of their usual meeting. Each newsletter will include links to websites or blogs on art topics. These links will, it is hoped, be less well known than those of the major galleries which are almost all offering virtual tours of their collections. Group members are encouraged to comment and give their own suggestions on items of interest to the group." Contact Bob Bell convenor discoveringart@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Family History Group The Group is meeting every two weeks during lockdown and continuing with the planned programme, focusing on the occupations of our ancestors.. It was lovely to see so many of the group on Zoom last week for our tales of the Mines and the Railways. Using the share screen facility, Dave Metcalf gave a fascinating talk about James Metcalfe who invented a safer braking system for steam trains. It was while testing the Metcalfe mechanism that the Mallard broke the speed record in 1938. Nigel amused us with his shared tales of a railway worker ancestor and his problem with time keeping, all logged in great detail by his bosses. Contact familyhistory@chalfontsu3a.org.uk for further group details

Garden Visits. It is so disappointing that we are not able to go on our garden visits at the moment and as yet I don't know when they may be likely to resume. Hopefully one or two of the trips planned for later in the year may take place. As an alternative to visits you might like to listen to some garden podcasts - gardener's question time, the RHS podcasts, and many more.

You can take a virtual garden tour - here are nine of the best, including Hidcote which was one of our planned trips

<https://www.gardensillustrated.com/gardens/gardens-to-visit/virtual-garden-tours-best/>

Barbara recommends signing up for the Newsletter from the Garden Museum which contains some interesting articles and access to online resources .

<https://gardenmuseum.org.uk/sign-mailing-list/>

If any of you are inclined, we would love to receive any write ups and accounts of the garden visits we took last year. These would make a good read for fellow CU3A members in our Newsletter and remind us of better times. So if you fancy a bit of a challenge, and assuming you have the time, please get writing. You can email your account to gardenvisits@chalfontsu3a.org.uk. or post it to Jane Barker, 25 School Lane , Chalfont St Peter SL9 9AT.

Also Jacqui Greenham wanted you to know that seeds and plants are available from Chalfont St Giles Gardens Association for anyone who has been unable to purchase to date.

Contact details are <https://www.csgga.org/seed-matching-and-plant-sale.html>

Mahjong Group We have been very creative. Originally, we looked into playing online – too risky as the game involves playing with strangers and for MONEY, a slippery slope if ever there was one! As the convenor for the group I took it upon myself to come up with a way in which we could play safely. Using Zoom I did a dry run with Maureen Jukes who was so helpful and supportive, and we ironed out a few creases. Since then we have played at least one game a week and now that we have got more members this has increased to 3 games a week. Whilst Maureen and I are currently designated hosts, a number of members have expressed an interest to manage games moving forward. This has been a huge learning curve for all of us, but I am so delighted but not entirely surprised by the tenacity of the members who are determined to carry on as far as possible with normal life – well as normal as it can be. It has been really humbling to receive thanks from members when they have finished playing a game – for just a short time we are taken out of the worries and concerns about coronavirus and instead we laugh and joke about the tiles we discard and the hands we attempt to play. I am also delighted to say that Hilary Robinson U3A Mahjong Subject Adviser has been in touch and taken our instructions so that they can be shared with other U3A Mahjong Groups UK wide. (Do hope we get a mention in the next newsletter!) It is no longer a competitive game, but that said aside we all gain so much more from the experience. Sam Patel convenor mahjong@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Walking group up to 6 miles

Messages have been coming in from the group by email and telephone which are always most welcome, whether about the walking group or anything else. David and April Morgan have suggested an app for iphones called 'go jauntly' which may give us some new ideas for walking routes when we get back in action. Chris and Gail Franklin have posted some recent photographs of bluebell woods which were not in bloom during the last CU3A walk from Hedgerley. We hope that the walk can be repeated next April to see the wonderful sight. The post is on the Chalfonts U3A Facebook Page [walking2-6miles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](https://www.facebook.com/walking2-6miles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk) .

Hot of the Press

Mr Motivator has filmed a week long programme of exercises exclusively for U3A members starting on Monday 20th April so that should be fun! Just need to find my workout gear!

And Finally! Jane Barker has very kindly shared with us an idiot's guide on how to listen to a podcast on your Smartphone.

1. iPhone (Apple)

The iPhone comes with a podcast app already installed. All you need to do is click on the podcast app icon and it will open up in the podcast app browse area. You can either just browse from there or you can click on search (bottom right on my phone) and then enter what you are looking for. For example, if you type in gardener's world you will be able to see a whole collection of shows which may interest you. Just then click on the one you want to listen to. It may ask you to subscribe, but often the individual episodes are also listed so you can just pick one of those if you prefer. Press the details link and then the play button.

2. Android phones (most other phones)

You need to install the Google podcasts app which you can find in the Play Store. Once installed and open, press the search button (probably in the middle at the bottom) and then type the subject you are interested in, into the search box and press search/magnifying glass icon. Then choose what you want to listen to as above.

3. BBC sounds

Also really helpful to have – install BBC sounds App so you can listen to all of their podcasts. You will need to create an account with a password, but it's very straightforward.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds>